

Application Serial No. 10/524,695
Reply to Office Action of October 18, 2007

PATENT
Docket: CU-4085

REMARKS

In the Office Action, dated October 18, 2007, the Examiner states that Claims 1-9 are pending, Claims 1-5 are rejected and Claims 6-9 are withdrawn. By the present Amendment, Applicant amends the specification, the claims, and the abstract.

In the Office Action, the abstract, specification and claims are objected to for various informalities. The application has been amended to correct these informalities.

In the Office Action, Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite. Original Claims 1-5 have been cancelled and replaced with new Claims 10-20 which have been drafted in accordance with US practice.

In the Office Action, Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Chapman et al. (EP 231,076). The Applicant considers that new Claims 10-20 are not anticipated by or obvious in view of this reference.

The scope of Chapman differs greatly from that of the present invention. Despite the features of the sealing members and fitting members of the cited document does not deal with the core of the present invention, i.e. the pretensioning of the nut prior to engagement of the nut and the male thread portion of the adjacent pipe. Even though Chapman discloses the feature of a nut exhibiting an internal surface of contact at the rear portion of the nut formed in a manner such that when the nut is carried out over the flange, the internal ledge at the rear edge of the nut abuts the radial rear face of a pipe end flange, the opposite end of the nut does not have any means (for example an external flange) for receipt of a spanning tool capable of tensioning the nut in an axial direction. The Applicant disagrees with the rejection in the view of Chapman disclosing press surfaces being capable of taking an axial pressure from a preloading tool. The end portions of the fittings 114B, 114B are chamfered and are not capable of receiving the preloading tool. Nor is there any flange at the forward end of the fitting member 302 capable of retaining the opposite end of the preloading tool. Furthermore there is no indication at all of the pretensioning of the fitting members 302, 304 prior to screw tightening the joint. Furthermore the female collar 304 does not exhibit the means of being compressed by a preloading tool prior to the tightening of the fitting members, the female collar

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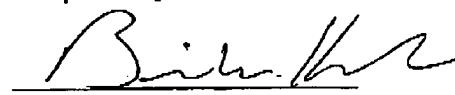
exhibiting an internal flange contact surface 308 at the rear end, which is the only possible area for applying a preloading force on the disclosed collar. Thus the present invention as claimed differs from the prior art represented by Chapman.

In light of the foregoing response, all the outstanding objections and rejections are considered overcome. Applicant respectfully submits that this application should now be in condition for allowance and respectfully requests favorable consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date


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Page 8 of 8